

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 08379 242338Z

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TAGS: PFOR, PA, MX

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STROESSNER'S VISIT TO MEXICO

REF: ASUNCION 3694

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT STROESSNER'S BRIEF VISIT TO ACAPULCO SEPT 19 AND 20 DEVELOPED INTO A WELL-PUBLICIZED GOOD WILL GESTURE IN WHICH TONE WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SUBSTANCE. WHILE STROESSNER AND ECHEVERRIA WERE EFFUSIVE IN THEIR PRAISE FOR EACH OTHER, THE MEXICAN PRESS TRIED TO PUT STROESSNER ON THE SPOT WHILE HANDLING ECHEVERRIA WITH CUSTOMARY GENTLENESS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON STROESSNER'S ARRIVAL IN ACAPULCO, ECHEVERRIA WELCOMED HIM AS THE "PRESIDENT OF A HEROIC LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLE" AND SAID THAT "PARAGUAY, LIKE MEXICO, IS STRUGGLING TO NOT STAGNATE AND TO RESOLVE ITS PROBLEMS IN A WORLD OF INFLATION, IN A WORLD OF MALADJUSTMENT, IN WHICH OUR POOR NATIONS HAVE TO CONFRONT DIFFICULT REALITIES EVERY DAY, BUT WHICH THEY DO WITH COURAGE, WITH DETERMINATION."

3. ON AUGUST 20, THE TWO PRESIDENTS HELD A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH MEXICAN REPORTERS ASKED STROESSNER
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 08379 242338Z

SEVERAL HOSTILE, PROBING QUESTIONS WHILE CONFINING

THEMSELVES TO VERY GENERAL, EASY-TO-ANSWER, QUESTIONS FOR ECHEVERRIA. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE REPORTER ASKED STROESSNER WHETHER IT WAS TRUE THAT MARTIN BORMAN IS BURIED IN PARAGUAY AND THAT OTHER PROMINENT NAZIS ARE LIVING THERE. STROESSNER, OBVIOUSLY ANNOYED, DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF WHERE BORMAN IS BURIED AND IGNORED THE SECOND PART OF THE QUESTION. ANOTHER REPORTER NOTED THAT COUPS D'ETAT ARE NOW IN STYLE IN LATIN AMERICA AND ASKED STROESSNER WHAT MEASURE HE HAD TAKEN TO AVOID ONE DURING HIS ABSENCE FROM PARAGUAY AND HOW HIS GOVERNMENT HAD MAINTAINED STABILITY FOR 21 YEARS. STROESSNER IGNORED THE FIRST PART OF THE QUESTION AND ANSWERED THE SECOND SAYING THAT THERE WAS "CHAOS AND ANARCHY AND NO DEMOCRACY" IN PARAGUAY "BETWEEN 1958 AND 1964" AND THAT NOW "REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY PREVAILS" AND "PROGRESS IS BEING MADE IN ALL AREAS" BECAUSE HIS GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED "NUMEROUS PROJECTS TO INCREASE PRODUCTION."

4. STROESSNER ALSO RESPONDED, RATHER EQUIVOCALLY, TO SEVERAL QUESTIONS ON FOREIGN POLICY AT THE SAME PRESS CONFERENCE. ASKED WHETHER PARAGUAY WOULD SUPPORT A SYMBOLIC MARCH BY LATIN LEADERS AT THE MEETING IN PANAMA NEXT YEAR (COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOLIVARIAN CONGRESS) IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CANAL, STROESSNER REPLIED "WE ARE ALWAYS ALERT TO ALL GESTURES WHICH ARE MADE AND SEE THE PROBLEMS WHICH THEY RAISE AMONG PEOPLES... WE ALWAYS SUPPORT OUR BROTHER AMERICAN NATIONS." IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT WHY PARAGUAY WAS NOT SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SELA, STROESSNER POINTED OUT THAT SELA WAS STILL UNDER STUDY AND THAT LATIN TECHNICAL EXPERTS WERE MEETING TO DISCUSS SELA AT THAT VERY MOMENT. FINALLY, WITH RESPECT TO THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER, STROESSNER SAID THAT "FOR PARAGUAY, WE BELIEVE THE FIRST THING IS TO PUT OUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER... WE ARE NOW PLACING THING IN ORDER, FIRST OF ALL WE ARE ACCEPTING ALL CONTACTS WITH NEIGHBORING, FRIENDLY NATIONS AND ALSO WITH THE WHOLE WORLD IN ORDER THAT WE CAN RESOLVE JOINTLY ALL THE PROBLEMS WHICH ARE GOING TO EXIST, ALWAYS ON THE BASIS OF RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 08379 242338Z

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